

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed March 11, 2004, Applicant amends his application and requests reconsideration. In this Amendment all formerly pending claims, not previously cancelled, are cancelled in favor of newly submitted claims 17-27. Accordingly, claims 17-27 are now pending.

The newly submitted claims are clearly supported by the application as filed. The invention as described by the new independent claim 17 relates to a display for a game machine, such as a slot machine, having a plurality of independently rotatable reels. Each reel has attached to it a corresponding reel sheet that includes a number of different symbols. As the reels turn, the sheets pass by a display window in which various symbols can be observed, at least when the reels are stopped. The reels are independently and selectively stoppable. In the described embodiment, a player actuates a button or other mechanical element to stop each reel from rotating. Each reel sheet includes, as part of the serially arranged symbols, at at least one location on the reel sheet, a single symbol that appears serially at least twice without any intervening different symbol. In the described embodiment of the patent application there are three appearances of each such repeating symbol on each reel sheet. Likewise, in that described embodiment, there are three reels.

The invention further encompasses a display window through which the player observes symbols on each of the reel sheets when the respective reels stop rotating. By providing multiple symbols on each reel sheet, a player is given visual cues, for attempting to stop each reel at a particular position. An object of the game is to achieve an alignment on a line of a particular combination of the symbols to establish a winning state in the game. In the display window in the invention, there are at least two lines on which symbols are simultaneously displayed when the reels stop rotating. These lines are parallel to the common axis about which the reels rotate. In the embodiment of the invention described in the patent application there are three such parallel lines on which a symbol of each reel is displayed, providing the possibility of three different combinations along those lines. In addition, in that specific embodiment, winning combinations can be achieved through combinations of symbols along diagonal lines that are oblique to the lines that are parallel to the axis of rotation of the reels.

In order that the repeated symbols on each reel sheet can be more readily recognized by a player, these repeated symbols may be different in color from each other. Further, the multiple symbols appearing serially may be desirable for stopping along one

of the lines to achieve a winning state through a particular combination of symbols and others of the repeated symbols may indicate a losing state if appearing on one of the lines. Thus, the player may be encouraged by some of the repeating symbols to stop the rotation of the corresponding reel with the repeated symbol displayed whereas it may be desirable to avoid displaying others of the repeated symbols. In the latter event, it is desirable to stop the rotation of the corresponding reel so that none of the repeating symbols is displayed.

The most recently examined claims were rejected as unpatentable over Ugawa (JP 5-68733), considered by itself and in combination with Kimura (U.S. Patent 4,618,150). These rejections are moot with respect to the newly submitted claims.

It is fundamental that to anticipate a claimed invention, a single reference must disclose all of the elements of that claimed invention. Further, in order for a claimed invention to be obvious in view of a combination of prior art publications, it is a prerequisite that the prior art publications disclose, in the aggregate, all of the elements of the invention claimed. Of course, disclosure of all the elements of the claimed invention is not sufficient to establish *prima facie* obviousness. In addition to the presence of all the elements of the claimed invention, there must be motivation to combine those elements as in the claimed invention to establish obviousness.

It is sufficient to point out that neither Ugawa nor Kimura discloses all of the elements of any claim. Thus, no combination of Ugawa and Kimura can even include the combination of elements of claim 17. Further, the dependent claims differentiate the invention even further from any potential combination of Ugawa and Kimura.

Neither Ugawa nor Kimura describe a display for a game in which each of the reel sheets includes a single symbol appearing serially, at least twice, without any intervening different symbol. The reliance upon *In re Gulack*, 217 USPQ 491 (Fed. Cir. 1983), in discounting this feature is misplaced. *In re Gulack* held patentable several printed loops of paper with printed information. The loops interacted in a way to produce a solution to a mathematical problem. The same reasoning applies here. The symbols of the reel sheets interact in a way through the display and multiple reels that make the “printed matter” doctrine inapplicable. In fact, *In re Gulack*, supports the patentability of claim 17 because of the interaction of the reel sheets in establishing (or not) winning combinations of symbols when the reel sheets become stationary after rotation.

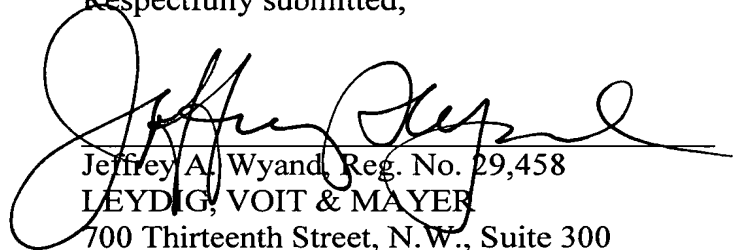
Further, neither Ugawa nor Kimura describes a display for a game in which there are at least two parallel winning lines along which combinations of symbols are displayed and on either of which winning combinations of symbols can appear. It follows that

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neither Ugawa nor Kimura can disclose or suggest a game display providing three parallel lines along which combinations of symbols that can provide a winning state can appear. Even further, there is no possibility of any disclosure in any combination of the two publications for establishing winning combinations of symbols along diagonal lines that are oblique to the three parallel winning lines. Thus, all of the newly submitted claims 17-27 are clearly allowable over the prior art applied in rejecting the previously examined claims.

Prompt allowance of claims 17-27 is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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